

- ❖ Don't hitchhike or give rides to strangers. If possible, have a cellular phone in your car.
- ❖ If you feel unsafe when you reach your destination, do not get out of your car. Drive to a safe place.
- ❖ If you think someone is following you, don't drive home. Drive to the nearest police or fire station, or 24 hour business and ask for help.

Sexual Assault Prevention

- ❖ Be cautious when inviting someone into your home or going to their home.
- ❖ Be aware and in control on your dates. Be selective in who you date, and realize you have a right to refuse a date. Set sexual limits. It is your body and no one has the right to force you to do anything you do not want to do.
- ❖ Be aware of your intake of any chemicals, alcohol, drugs and medication can make it difficult to think correctly and react quickly in a dangerous situation.

While at Home

- ❖ Keep your doors locked while at home or out. Don't hide keys outside. Don't let any strangers into your home, even to use the phone. Call for them if necessary.
- ❖ If you use an answering machine, request that callers leave their name and number. List only your last name on a mailbox or use a post office box. Don't give out personal information over the phone or in writing to strangers and instruct children not to give out information.

- ❖ Install a peephole viewer in your door, and don't open it without first knowing who is on the other side. If it is a service or sales call, make them show identification and then verify it with the company.

If You Are A Victim

- ❖ Immediately report the crime to the police. Try to give an accurate description of the attacker including color of eyes, hair, type of clothing, height, sex, and any unusual features. If a vehicle is involved, get a license plate number.
- ❖ Call a Victim Assistance Service or Rape Crisis Hotline to help you deal with the trauma of the crime. After you report it to the police, call the Victims' Compensation Hotline #1-800-824-8263

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Crime Prevention/Brochures/Rev.05/02

Personal Safety



**Know How You
Can Help Prevent
Being A
Victim of Crime**

◆ Personal Safety ◆

Personal Safety is everyone's concern. In the past twenty years, violence has increasingly affected every aspect of our lives, and takes away opportunities, dignity and freedom.

Personal safety is a lifestyle. The best defense against crime is to practice good personal safety. When practiced effectively, the following information can reduce your chance of becoming a victim of crime.

Basic Safety Tips

- ◆ The most effective way to prevent crime is through common sense, awareness, and basic safety precautions. Remember that your safety is your responsibility. Trust your instincts and use your senses to always be aware of your surroundings. Prepare to be safe and think ahead of what to do. Have a plan.
- ◆ Let someone know where you are going and when you will return. Call if you are going to be late or if your plans change.
- ◆ Know the areas where you live and work. Find out the locations of police and fire stations, hospitals, public telephones, and 24 hour places of business.
- ◆ Stay aware and awake on public transportation. Use well-lit stops.
- ◆ Use well-lit, highly visible pay phones and ATM's, and have your card ready to use.
- ◆ Call 911 if you are suspicious of an activity or afraid of a situation.

- ◆ If you feel unsafe after working or shopping late in the evening, ask a colleague or a security officer to walk you to your car.
- ◆ Keep your home well-lit. Leave a television or radio on when you are away. When returning home, be aware of all vehicles and individuals around your home.
- ◆ Carry only the items you need for the day in your purse or bag. Never leave your purse in a shopping cart or on a counter. Wear a day pack or carry your purse under your coat or close to your body. Record all your credit card numbers, and keep them in a safe place.
- ◆ If someone suspicious enters an elevator you're on, get off. If you feel uneasy about someone who is waiting for the elevator with you, walk away and return later.
- ◆ If someone confronts you with a weapon, consider if what you are protecting is worth the risk. If it isn't your life you are protecting, then it isn't worth it.

While Walking, Jogging or Biking

- ◆ If harassed by someone in a car, walk quickly or run in the opposite direction toward safety. If you become frightened, yell...Don't scream for help. Accept rides only from people you know and trust.
- ◆ Avoid isolated areas. If dark, try to go with a friend and wear reflective clothing. Use familiar routes in well-lit, populated areas and avoid alleys and parking lots. Don't use headphones.
- ◆ Send the message that you are calm and confident. Maintain good eye contact with

everyone around you and be observant. Remember faces. Be assertive.

While Driving

- ◆ Keep your car in working order at all times and your gas tank at least half full. If your car runs out of gas or breaks down, tie a white cloth to the door handle to alert police or use a "Call Police" sign in the rear window. Stay in the car and keep doors and windows locked until the police arrive. If someone stops, ask them to call the police for you.
- ◆ Plan your route and try not to travel alone. If unfamiliar with a location, call ahead for good directions. Keep doors locked and windows rolled up.
- ◆ Park in well-lit areas and have your keys ready when you approach your car. Don't overload your arms with packages. Instead, make several trips. Check the interior and exterior of your car. Be aware of anyone around your car.
- ◆ When stopped, leave room ahead of your car to escape. Don't box yourself in. If someone approaches your car for information, keep the windows up, the doors locked, and be prepared to drive away. Don't daydream while stopped at intersections. If your car is bumped from behind and the circumstances are suspicious, motion the other driver to follow you to the nearest police station.
- ◆ If you see a stranded motorist, call the police for them. Don't attempt to stop and help them yourself.